

A YELLOW-FLOWERED FORM OF RHODODENDRON CAROLINIANUM

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Rhododendron carolinianum Rehder f. *luteum*, forma nova.

A low, evergreen shrub of medium-compact growth. Branchlets brown with scattered scales. Leaves lanceolate, acuminate to acute at the apex, cuneate at the base, the blade to 6.3 cm. long, 2.5 cm. wide, yellowish green, glabrous above, reticulate, densely scaly below with scales separated by one-half their width, the petioles to 1.2 cm. long, scaly. Inflorescences terminal, the rachis 2 cm. long, about 6-flowered, the pedicels about 1 cm. long, scaly. Calyx-lobes 5, ca. 2.7 mm. long, scaly; corolla rotate-funnel-shaped, 4 cm. across, mimosa yellow [Horticultural Color Chart 602/1], nearly self-colored, scaly on the outside, the lobes obtuse, the tube 1.0 cm. long; stamens 10, ca. 1.5 cm. long, slightly exserted, hairy at the base; ovary oblong, ca. 1 cm. long, scaly; style glabrous. Capsule narrowly oblong, 1.3 cm. long, scaly.

Frutex humilis sempervirens, compacto-mediocriter incremens. Ramuli fusci squamis sparsis. Folia lanceolata, acuminata vel acuta, basi cuneata, lamina 6.3 cm. longa, 2.5 cm. lata, flavo-viridia, reticulata, dense squamosa. Inflorescentia terminalis, rachis 2 cm. longus, sex-floribus intextus; pedicelli ca. 1 cm. longi; corolla rotato-infundibuliformis, 4 cm. lata, "mimosa flava," prope uniformiter colorata, extus squamosa, lobis obtusis, tubulo 1.0 cm. longo; stamina 10, ca. 1.5 cm. longa, parum exserta, basi pilosa; ovarium squamosum, stilus glaber. Capsula 1.3 cm. longa, squamosa.

TYPE: Plant in cultivation, 2728 Lemons Beach Road, Tacoma 66, Washington; known only to have come from "the mountains of western North Carolina," L. F. Frisbie, May 15, 1958 (Herb. Arnold Arboretum).

This very handsome and distinctly different color-form of *Rhododendron carolinianum* was one of a group of native plants obtained about 1945 by Halfdan Lem of Seattle, Washington. The plants were offered to Mr. Lem as being "yellow-flowered carolinianum." He accepted the small plants, but had such small faith in the possibility of the claim that he promptly forgot about the plants in the press of other matters. In the spring of 1957 this writer on a visit to Mr. Lem's garden was attracted by one of the plants in flower. Due to my keen interest Mr. Lem let me have the form and it was brought to Tacoma. Subsequent efforts to gain information as to the exact natural location of the plants have met with no success. The possible collectors whom we have contacted have all given negative answers, and seemed to know nothing of such a form of the species, so it has proved impossible to obtain more exact information than that given above.

At the present writing the plant is thriving, is making excellent growth, and has adapted itself very well to this climate. It will make an excellent

addition to the series of evergreen rhododendrons, and will be a valuable horticultural subject wherever rhododendrons are grown. Here in western Washington, where a wide range of types of the genus is grown, we are very much pleased with this new color form. The hybridizing potential of the *luteum* form is intriguing, especially so in the light of such acceptable hybrids of the typical form as 'Conewago' and 'Conestoga.'

This yellow-flowered form of *Rhododendron carolinianum* is being propagated by ground layering and every effort will be made to see that it is generally available through the Washington Rhododendron Society, Inc.

In addition to this color variation the typical form of the species with clear pink flowers is highly valued for decorative garden purposes, and a special place is reserved for the white-flowered form, *R. carolinianum* var. *album* Rehder. Good foliage, compact habit, and free flowering with chaste trusses of multiple flowers make this form a favorite which sometimes wins in rhododendron shows over all other species exhibited. The three color forms of *Rhododendron carolinianum* make a delightful combination in the garden, a grouping of true distinction. But we have found that it pays to be selective, especially with the pink and white forms of the species. Collected plants are not difficult to obtain, and persistent culling will turn up a very few plants of outstanding quality. Here in the West where the genus grows so well, some shaping and pruning are essential if one is to have compact plants.

These distinctive forms of native American rhododendron species, both evergreen and deciduous solidly substantiate the importance of the work of the selective collector, a field in which the Washington Rhododendron Society has made a notable contribution.

2728 LEMONS BEACH ROAD
TACOMA 66, WASHINGTON